

South Korea to ramp up virus curbs over fears of second wave

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South Korea has announced it will ramp up coronavirus restrictions across the country starting Sunday to try and control a growing outbreak.

The move came as South Korea—which had largely brought its earlier outbreak under control—reported 332 cases on Saturday, the highest daily figure since early March.

Virus curbs were tightened in the Seoul region last week but with more than 300 cases reported two days in a row, authorities expanded them to the rest of the country.

"We are at a very precarious stage where we could see the beginning of a nationwide second wave," said health and welfare minister Park Neung-hoo at a press briefing.

Controlling the spread of the virus was the highest priority, he added.

The expanded measures include restrictions on gatherings and activities including [professional sports](#), which will be played behind closed doors again.

All beaches around the country will also be closed from midnight.

South Korea has reported a total of 17,002 coronavirus infections with 309 deaths.

A majority of the new cases have come from the greater Seoul region—home to half of the country's 51 million people.

South Korea endured one of the worst early outbreaks outside mainland China but brought it broadly under control with extensive tracing and testing while never imposing the kind of lockdowns ordered in much of Europe and other parts of the world.

The country has been seen as a model on how to combat the pandemic with the public largely following safety health measures such as [face masks](#).

It even started allowing limited numbers of spectators at sports games in July—which was reversed for the greater Seoul area last week and will

be reversed nationwide from Sunday.

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